

Test... of 2 pages.
No. 1
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Draft No. 1 dated November 25, 1947
JMcCormack/alp

By Authority of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission
1-7-48

*This memo was
in OMA 9/15/50 - only copy.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD of a conference in the President's office
at 12:30 pm, November 25, 1947

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The President
Mr. Forrestal
Mr. Lovett (for General Marshall)
Admiral Leahy
Mr. Lilienthal
General McCormack
Captain Russell

*Classification changed to [redacted]
by [redacted] of General James McCormack
Faith Seay date 9/7/50.*

Mr. Lilienthal presented the attached "Memorandum for the

President," which the President read. The President asked whether Mr. Forrestal and Mr. Lovett were in agreement with the memorandum, and on being informed that such was the case, approved and signed the original of the paper, which he retained for his files. Later during the conference he also signed and handed to Mr. Forrestal the directive for the removal of natives:

The question of publicity was discussed for some thirty minutes. During this discussion the President had in hand the draft press release which is attached. It was Admiral Leahy's opinion that no useful purpose was served by naming Eniwetok as the test site at this time. Naming the location now would give foreign powers the opportunity of directing their early attention to the matter of gathering information on the test, which in Admiral Leahy's opinion would be a serious loss of information.

Mr. Lovett discussed at length the State Department's view

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that the release of any further information should be avoided until after the close of the General Assembly, and that General Marshall desired to approve any release which might be proposed for issue during the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London. The President was sympathetic to General Marshall's problems. It was also pointed out that a release immediately following the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers would have an unfortunate reaction, particularly if the meeting had not been too successful; likewise a release during the sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers might give the Russian Foreign Minister an excuse to walk out. Mr. Lovett also mentioned the point that the State Department's dealings in the Trusteeship Council require that they declare a "closed area" for the test site and that they be prepared to defend out action in selecting a site in the Trust Territories.

Mr. Lilienthal made a strong point that we were interested in the dissemination of information ^{to the press} primarily as a precautionary measure to enable the subsequent control of public relations concerning this test. The President as well as Mr. Forrestal and Mr. Lovett agreed with this point. *The President turned to Admiral Leahy and said in effect "I am sorry to over-rule you on this point, but I believe a timely press release to be necessary."*

It was suggested by Mr. Lovett that more information than is contained in the draft press release was essential to a really good initial news story which might stem off subsequent questioning. Mr. Forrestal mentioned that it was a practice in the Services to issue a press release, and then make available additional background information to correspondents. There was no disagreement that it would be useful for the Commission's representatives in conjunction with the Departments of State and National Defense to devise a new draft public statement.

Admiral Leahy, going back to his original point, suggested that

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

it would be a good idea to deal in this press release with "the construction of proving grounds" rather than tying present activities to an operation as such. With this change it was apparent that he would have less objection to a press release. The point was agreed by all.

During the course of the discussion it was mentioned by Mr. Lovett that it would be valuable to include in the news background the information that the natives on Eniwetok Atoll are not now living in any historic home, but rather on islands to which they were moved by United States Forces during the war. It was also mentioned that since construction activities are scheduled to start on December 5, 1947, this fact might be included in the news background.

The President made it clear during the conference that he wished included in any public information a statement of fact regarding the benefits of such a test as is now planned in the fuller understanding of atomic energy and consequently its application to non-military advances -- of benefit to all mankind. The President also studied the chart of the western Pacific and indicated his clear understanding of why Eniwetok had been chosen, -- its isolated location and its position down-wind from any nearby inhabited areas.

James McCormack, Jr.
brigadier General, AUS

Attachments:

Draft "B" of 1 copy - 3 pages
made on 26 November 1947 per
Captain Russell by Smiley, CY

*note: This document is the original
1-7-48 & changed to 1-7-48*

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